

WESTERN RESERVE HERITAGE AREAS STUDY ACT

SEPTEMBER 7, 2004.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. POMBO, from the Committee on Resources,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 3257]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 3257) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to determine the suitability and feasibility of establishing the Western Reserve Heritage Area, having considered the same, report favorably thereon with an amendment and recommend that the bill as amended do pass.

The amendment is as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Western Reserve Heritage Areas Study Act”.

SEC. 2. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE STUDY REGARDING THE WESTERN RESERVE, OHIO.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:

(1) The area that encompasses the modern-day counties of Trumbull, Mahoning, Ashtabula, Portage, Geagua, Lake, Cuyahoga, Summit, Medina, Huron, Lorain, Erie, Ottawa, and Ashland in Ohio with the rich history in what was once the Western Reserve, has made a unique contribution to the cultural, political and industrial development of the United States.

(2) The Western Reserve is distinctive as the land settled by the people of Connecticut after the Revolutionary War. The Western Reserve holds a unique mark as the original wilderness land of the West that many settlers migrated to in order to begin life outside of the original 13 colonies.

(3) The Western Reserve played a significant role in providing land to the people of Connecticut whose property and land was destroyed during the Revolution. These settlers were descendants of the brave immigrants who came to the Americas in the 17th century.

(4) The Western Reserve offered a new destination for those who moved west in search of land and prosperity. The agricultural and industrial base that began in the Western Reserve still lives strong in these prosperous and historical counties.

(5) The heritage of the Western Reserve remains transfixed in the counties of Trumbull, Mahoning, Ashtabula, Portage, Geagua, Lake, Cuyahoga, Summit,

Medina, Huron, Lorain, Erie, Ottawa, and Ashland in Ohio. The people of these counties are proud of their heritage as shown through the unwavering attempts to preserve agricultural land and the industrial foundation that has been embedded in this region since the establishment of the Western Reserve. Throughout these counties, historical sites, and markers preserve the unique traditions and customs of its original heritage.

(6) The counties that encompass the Western Reserve continue to maintain a strong connection to its historic past as seen through its preservation of its local heritage, including historic homes, buildings, and centers of public gatherings.

(7) There is a need for assistance for the preservation and promotion of the significance of the Western Reserve as the natural, historic and cultural heritage of the counties of Trumbull, Mahoning, Ashtabula, Portage, Geauga, Lake, Cuyahoga, Summit, Medina, Huron, Lorain, Erie, Ottawa and Ashland in Ohio.

(8) The Department of the Interior is responsible for protecting the Nation's cultural and historical resources. There are significant examples of such resources within these counties and what was once The Western Reserve to merit the involvement of the Federal Government in the development of programs and projects, in cooperation with the State of Ohio and other local governmental entities, to adequately conserve, protect, and interpret this heritage for future generations, while providing opportunities for education and revitalization.

(b) STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall, in consultation with the State of Ohio, the counties of Trumbull, Mahoning, Ashtabula, Portage, Geauga, Lake, Cuyahoga, Summit, Medina, Huron, Lorain, Erie, Ottawa, and Ashland, and other appropriate organizations, carry out a study regarding the suitability and feasibility of establishing the the Western Reserve Heritage Area in these counties in Ohio.

(2) CONTENTS.—The study shall include analysis and documentation regarding whether the Study Area—

(A) has an assemblage of natural, historic, and cultural resources that together represent distinctive aspects of American heritage worthy of recognition, conservation, interpretation, and continuing use, and are best managed through partnerships among public and private entities and by combining diverse and sometimes noncontiguous resources and active communities;

(B) reflects traditions, customs, beliefs, and folklife that are a valuable part of the national story;

(C) provides outstanding opportunities to conserve natural, historic, cultural, or scenic features;

(D) provides outstanding recreational and educational opportunities;

(E) contains resources important to the identified theme or themes of the Study Area that retain a degree of integrity capable of supporting interpretation;

(F) includes residents, business interests, nonprofit organizations, and local and State governments that are involved in the planning, have developed a conceptual financial plan that outlines the roles for all participants, including the Federal Government, and have demonstrated support for the concept of a national heritage area;

(G) has a potential management entity to work in partnership with residents, business interests, nonprofit organizations, and local and State governments to develop a national heritage area consistent with continued local and State economic activity;

(H) has a conceptual boundary map that is supported by the public; and

(I) has potential or actual impact on private property located within or abutting the Study Area.

(c) BOUNDARIES OF THE STUDY AREA.—The Study Area shall be comprised of the counties of Trumbull, Mahoning, Ashtabula, Portage, Geauga, Lake, Cuyahoga, Summit, Medina, Huron, Lorain, Erie, Ottawa, and Ashland in Ohio.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of H.R. 3257 is to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to determine the suitability and feasibility of establishing the Western Reserve Heritage Area.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Under H.R. 3257, the proposed Western Reserve Heritage Area would encompass the modern-day counties of Trumbull, Mahoning, Ashtabula, Portage, Geauga, Lake, Cuyahoga, Summit, Medina, Huron, Lorain, Erie, Ottawa, and Ashland in Ohio. The rich history in what was once the Western Reserve has made a unique contribution to the cultural, political and industrial development of the United States. In addition, the Reserve is distinctive as the land settled by the people of Connecticut after the Revolutionary War and holds a unique mark as the original wilderness land of the West that many settlers migrated to begin life outside the original 13 colonies.

H.R. 3257 would direct the Secretary of the Interior to study the feasibility of establishing the Western Reserve Heritage Area, in consultation with the State of Ohio, the counties previously listed and appropriate organizations within the intended Western Reserve Heritage Area.

COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 3257 was introduced on October 7, 2003, by Congressman Tim Ryan (D-OH). The bill was referred to the Committee on Resources, and within the Committee to the Subcommittee on National Parks, Recreation and Public Lands. On July 14, 2004, the Full Committee met to consider the bill. By unanimous consent, the Subcommittee on National Parks, Recreation and Public Lands was discharged from further consideration of the bill. An amendment in the nature of a substitute was offered by Chairman Richard Pombo (R-CA). Specifically, the amendment further required the study to be conducted by the Secretary of the Interior to analyze the potential or actual impact on private property located in or abutting the study area. The amendment was agreed to by unanimous consent. The bill as amended was then ordered favorably reported to the House of Representatives by unanimous consent.

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Regarding clause 2(b)(1) of rule X and clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Resources' oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Article I, section 8 and Article IV, section 3 of the Constitution of the United States grant Congress the authority to enact this bill.

COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XIII

1. Cost of Legislation. Clause 3(d)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires an estimate and a comparison by the Committee of the costs which would be incurred in carrying out this bill. However, clause 3(d)(3)(B) of that rule provides that this requirement does not apply when the Committee has included in its report a timely submitted cost estimate of the bill prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office under section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

2. Congressional Budget Act. As required by clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, this bill does not contain any new budget authority, spending authority, credit authority, or an increase or decrease in revenues or tax expenditures.

3. General Performance Goals and Objectives. This bill does not authorize funding and therefore, clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives does not apply.

4. Congressional Budget Office Cost Estimate. Under clause 3(c)(3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 403 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has received the following cost estimate for this bill from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office:

H.R. 3257—Western Reserve Heritage Areas Study Act

H.R. 3257 would direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of certain counties in Ohio to determine their national significance as well as the feasibility and suitability of designating them collectively as the Western Reserve Heritage Area. The study would include an analysis of the natural, historic, and cultural resources of the study area and would determine whether they provide significant conservation and recreational opportunities.

Based on information from the Department of the Interior, CBO estimates that completing the proposed study would cost \$300,000 over the next few years, assuming the availability of appropriated funds. Enacting the bill would not affect direct spending or revenues.

H.R. 3257 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Megan Carroll. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

COMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC LAW 104-4

This bill contains no unfunded mandates.

PREEMPTION OF STATE, LOCAL OR TRIBAL LAW

This bill is not intended to preempt any State, local or tribal law.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

If enacted, this bill would make no changes to existing law.